RAJYA SABHA

Friday, the 3rd December, 1999/ 12th Agrahayana, 1921 (Saka)

The House met at Eleven of the clock, **Mr. Chairman** *in the Chair.*

MEMBER SWORN

Shri Nana Deshmukh (Nominated)

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No. 81.

Recruitment of Assamese in Indian Railways

*81. DR. (SMT.) JOYASREE GOSWAMI MAHANTA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) how many persons have been recruited from Assam in the Indian Railways since 1996, year-wise;

(b) whether Government have any scheme for employment of the youth of Assam, it being a backward and deprived State;

(c) if so, how; and

(d) if not, whether Government would think over the matter before the millennium starts, as a package drive?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE): (a) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Recruitment figures are not maintained statewise. However, for the convenience of the people of Assam and other N.E. States, one Railway Recruitment Board is functioning at Guwahati.

(b) The Govt. is highly concerned about the development of Assam and North Eastern Region. However, as far as appointment in Railways is concerned, there is no special scheme for any State or region. Only normal recruitment is done, which is based on requirements projected by the Railways/Production Units.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Does not arise.

DR. (SMT.) JOYASREE GOSWAMI MAHANTA: Sir, my first Supplementary is in two parts.

Sir, the answer to my question given by the hon. Minister is not satisfactory. The State of Assam is full of tribals and of economically backward people.They should be enabled to come up equally with the people in other parts of the country. The Department of Railways has got recruitment boards. In spite of that, why has the hon. Minister not given the figures and satistics as asked for by me in my question?

The second part of my supplementary is: Will the hon. Minister consider launching a recuritment drive to recruit women scouts and guides and those talented in the field of sports and also those belonging to the families of freedom fighters, as India has completed 50 glorious years of its independence?

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: Sir, I appreciate the points raised by the hon. Member. Of course, we are very much concerned about the North-Eastern areas, especially Assam. But, Sir, you will appreciate as the Indian Railway have an all-India character, we cannot discriminate between one State and another. That is why we have got 19 RRBs (Railway Recruitment Boards). The hon. Member has mentioned about recruiting candidates from the tribal and economically backward areas I agree we have to give a greater priority to these people. But, Sir, because the Railway have an all-India character, anybody from any part of the country can apply for a job. But, Sir, I have taken note of the points which the hon. Member has made in regard to the North-Eastern region.

As regards recruitment of women scouts and guides and sports persons, we have already got such a project with us. We are already giving employment to women, scouts and guides and sports persons. We have got a quota for this purpose.

DR. (SMT.) JOYASREE GOSWAMI MAHANTA : My second supplementary is: will the hon. Railway Minister kindly throw light on the new gauge conversion projects carried out in Assam? May I know from the hon. Minister whether her Ministry has taken up new projects in that region, in order to develop that areas and provide employment, especially, to the local people?

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have already said that this gauge conversion is not related to this question. It is regarding "Recruitment of Assamese in Indian Railways." However, I assure the hon. Member that we want to help the people of Assam and North-East in spite of some problems like insurgency. We know that there are some problems there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Hanumanthappa. The question is about the recruitment of Assamese in Indian Railways.

SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA: According to the Minister's reply, there are special programmes for the North-East, to take care of them. Even though there is a separate

Railway Recruitment Board for Assam and the North-Eastern States, figures regarding the number of people from that region is not forthcoming. Sir, the taste of the pudding is in its eating. Even though there is a separate Railway Recruitment Board for that region, you could have at least, given the figures in respect of Assam and the North-Eastern States. I can understand you may not have the figures of the total number of people recruited, State-wise by the Railway Recruitment Board. But there is a Railway Recruitment Board for Assam and the North Eastern States, and you could have informed the House that so many people have been recruited from that region in the last two or three years. At least, that could have satisfied the people of that area. That is number one.

What has happened in the Central Recruitment Board, particularly, in certain cases? Earlier, when it was centralised, even for the vacancies in Lakshadweep, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and in the North-Eastern States, people from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Central India were recruited and posted there. This has created unhappiness among the people there. Even now, I request the Railway Minister to give the figures for the last three years in respect of Assam and the North-Eastern States. Of course, some people may be from outside, because of the Railways bearing an all india character. But, atleast, a majority of them will be from that local area. Please give us the figures. I feel the figures with regard to the recruitment of people from Assam and the North Eastern States should be given so that message will go from Parliament, so that the people from that region do not feel that they are being neglected. This should be the attitude. That is the spirit of the question. I think the answer should come forth giving the total number of people recruited from that region. If you don't have the figures for each State, Assam Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya -- I can understand. If you give the total number recruited from there, at least, the people will feel happy that so many people were recruited. You can give us that figure. You may not be having information about the number of people recruited from the North East, at the all India level.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I agree with what the hon. Member has said. If the people from Assam and the North Eastern States have applied for the posts advertised by the Railway Recruitment Boards in other parts of the country, then, there is a problem. I have to include that also. Since the hon. Member has asked for the figures in respect of Assam and the North Eastern States where Railway Departments are there, I can give the figures. The number of people recruited by the Railway Recruitment Board, Guwahati, during the year 1996-97 was 41. During the year 1997-98, it was 728. And during the April, 1999 to October, 1999, it was 73.

SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA : Very good.

SHRI JEBON ROY: I do not think the Railway Minister will be able to help the local people of Assam or the youth in any part of the country unless she decides to lift the ban on recruitment and also abolish the policy of slashing down recruitment in the Railways. What I would like to know from the Railway Minister: (a) What is the ratio

of outgoing people, that is, retirements and intake of people, that is, recruitments in Assam during the last four or five years? (b) Will the hon. Railway Minister lift the ban on recruitment, as well as abolish the policy of slashing down recruitment in the Railways?

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: Actually, this year, we have recruited 73 people from Assam. From 1998 onwards, there are some vacancies. We have initiated action to fill up these posts. The hon. Member said about the lifting ban on recruitment policy.

SHRI JIBON ROY: The quetion is: the ratio of intake and outgo. How many people are retiring; and how many people are being recruited? I want that ratio.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: Sir, it all depends on the time of retirement of the people. This year, the number of employees going to retire is 24,000. The retirements will be more than 24,000. As a result of this, the number of vacancies in Guwahati will be 498. There is no ban on recruitment by the Railway Recruitment Boards. Though there is a proposal to reduce the number of intake, we have not agreed to it because we have to protect the interests of the employees also.

SHRI JIBON ROY: Outgoing is 24,000 employees; and intake is only 4,500 or 5,000 persons. It is a dangerous situation.

MUKARI MAMATA BANERJEE No, Sir.

SHRI JIBON ROY: But your figure says so.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: It is only about Guwahati, I said.

SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA: Sir, as stated by the hon. Home Minister, one of the root causes of insurgency is unemployment. I come from a State which is reeling under insurgency, that is, the State of Assam. I would like to seek one clarification from the hon. Minister. What is the category-wise breakup of reserved posts for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes lying vacant in the North-Eastern Frontier Railway till date and what is the action being taken or proposed to be taken by the Railways to clear the backlog in this regard?

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: Sir, I have the total figures for all over the country regarding the SC-ST backlog. In Group-C, for SC, is 1397 and ST 1323. In the case of group 'D' for SC 2212 and ST 1776.

SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA: I am asking about the North-Eastern region.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: We have the figures for the NEF Railway. If you ask about any particular subject, if you have any particular question, I can send a letter in writing to you.

SHRI V.P. DURAISAMY: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the recruitment for various posts in the Indian Railways is very slow. May I know from the hon. Minister whether the

various Railway Service Commissions are ridden with corruption, nepotism and favourtism. What steps is the Minister going to take to find out an end for this? Is it a fact that the officials working in the Examination Unit are leaking out the question papers for getting money and other things? Has the Railway Board taken any action against .....

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you referring to all these things in Assam or all over the country?

SHRI V.P. DURAISAMY: The main question is pertaining to Assam.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But your question is not pertaining to Assam.

SHRI V.P. DURAISAMY: I am asking about the Railway Recuritment Board.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. Your question does not arise from the main question. It is about Assam only. Shri Arun Kumar.

DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the hon. Minister has stated that the recruitment is done on an all-India basis through the Railway Recuriment Boards. We know that for the youth, the candidates, from the North-East, it is difficult to go to any other Recuritment Board to get employment. But there is also a tendency that people from other parts, taking advantage of the situation, pass through this Railway Recruitment Board. I want to know precisely from the hon. Minister whether the Railway Ministry has any reservation policy for recruitment for a particular jurisdiction, say the North-Eastern Frontier Railway, for Grade III and Grade IV, from among the residents within that jurisdiction? Also, because of the non-exposure, the North-Eastern youth require training, pre-examination training. Has the Railway Ministry proposed any pre-examination training facilities to be provided in all the North-Eastern States?

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: Sir, you will appreciate that according to our Constitution, we cannot reserve any quota for a particular State because the Indian Railways is an Indian service and the Indian Railways is the life-line of the nation. Anybody is entitled to apply through the open advertisement. But, as for what the hon. Member has said, I appreciate his concern. I have noted his concerns and certainly we will go into the details and then we will let him know.

DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: What about pre-examination training, Madam?

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: Regarding pre-examination training, of course, there are so many institutions which exist in our country. We also give training to apprentices. They can apply at any time. Apprentice training is also there.

DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: My question is,.....

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, Mr. Narendra Mohan. (*Interruptions*). It is all over now. Mr. Narendra Mohan.

श्री नरेन्द्र मोहन: सभापति जी, मंत्री जी ने असम के बारे में जो कुछ बताया और चिन्ता भी व्यक्त की तथा यह बताया कि रेलवे की सेवाएं अखिल भारतीय हैं अत: वे उसका राज्यवार ब्यौरा नहीं दे सकतीं कि किस भाग से कितनी भर्ती हुई लेकिन उन्होंने कहा कि असम में एक विशेष रिक्रूटमैंट बोर्ड की स्थापना गुहावटी में की गई है। अत: प्रश्न यह है कि क्या उस क्षेत्र की समस्याओं को देखने के लिए भारत सरकार अपनी नीति में कोई परिवर्तन करने की सोच रही है? आवश्यकता इस बात की है कि वह क्षेत्र, जहां के युवकों में बेकारी सर्वाधिक है क्या उनकी समस्याओं के निदान के लिए भारत सरकार, और विशेष रूप से रेलवे मंत्रालय अपना कोई दायित्व मानती है?

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: Sir, the incidence of the problem of unemployment is very high in our country. It is prevalent in all parts of the country.In the North-Eastern region, there is a problem of insurgency and the youth in that part of the country are facing acute problems. That is why I would like to assure this House that we will review the situation, and if possible, do everything for this particular purpose.

Performance of Chairmen and M.Ds. of PSUs

*82. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:†
SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to review the performance of Chairmen and Managing Directors heading Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) in the fertilizer, drugs, pharmaceuticals, chemicals and petro-chemicals sectors; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps being taken in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SURESH PRABHU): (a) to (b) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) The review of the performance of Chairman and Managing Directors/ Chief Executives of Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) is a continuous process during the currency of their respective tenures and includes their Annual Confidential Reports (ACRs). The performance reported in the ACRs encompasses the role of the individual as well as other qualitative attributes. Since the Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers has a number of loss-making/sick PSUs under its control, the performance of their CMDs would be subjected to stricter monitoring and closer scrutiny within the laid down framework.

SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN: Sir, I find that the reply given by the Minister is a little bit evasive. The Minister has not answered part (b) of the question. Anyhow, the hon. Minister has said the review of the performance of Chairman and Managing Directors/

† The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri J. Chitharanjan.